



### **Top Four Things to Do Now to Prepare for CCSS English Language Arts**

The Common Core State Standards (CCSS) in English Language Arts and Literacy in History/Social Studies, Science, and Technical Subjects represent an extraordinary opportunity to provide students, regardless of personal circumstance or where they attend school, with world class skills needed for success in postsecondary education and career. The CCSS will be taught in all Idaho public schools in 2013-14, and the standards will be assessed in the spring of 2015.

Here are some concrete steps that can be taken right now to further the cause of implementation and integration of the Common Core State Standards in our Idaho classrooms.

1. **Explore the new definition of text complexity and build test dependent questioning into instruction and assessment across content areas.** Student ability to provide specific and relevant evidence from text and sources will figure heavily in the new assessment being developed by the Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium (SBAC). This assessment will be operational in Idaho in the spring of 2015.

See pages 2-16 in the CCSS ELA and Literacy Appendix A:

[http://www.sde.idaho.gov/site/common/english/docs/ELA%20%20Appendix\\_A.pdf](http://www.sde.idaho.gov/site/common/english/docs/ELA%20%20Appendix_A.pdf)

See Best Practices Text Complexity Resources:

<http://www.sde.idaho.gov/site/common/ELAcore/proDev.htm>

(Click “Best Practices Text Complexity and the CCSS Summer 2012 DR”)

2. **Every student writing every day.** Begin to embed and weave routine writing assignments in instruction across all content areas. These assignments should ask students to read and analyze complex texts or sources, research effectively, collaborate, and create material to be presented in written and oral form. The SBAC assessment, operational in spring 2015, will require students to write about what they read, view, or hear at every tested grade (grades 3-8 and 11).

What best exemplifies the depth and complexity of expectation on the new SBAC test? The Performance Tasks, which come complete with rubrics or sets of rules for scoring. Many sample items, Performance Tasks included, are available at this link:

<http://www.smarterbalanced.org/smarter-balanced-assessments/>

3. **Visit our Common Core Tool Box** for the latest in resources and professional development in support of CCSS implementation:

<http://www.sde.idaho.gov/site/common/>

4. **What's on the NEW test?** The test development process of the Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium (SBAC) is completely transparent. To see what the expectations are for students in all grade levels and the many item types employed, visit this link to view sample items:

<http://www.smarterbalanced.org/smarter-balanced-assessments/>.

To learn more about the test design, use these modules created to support teacher item writing and review activities:

<http://www.smarterbalanced.org/smarter-balanced-assessments/item-writing-and-review/>